NEGRO LINT FARMS TURN TO COWS

Atlanta Constitution 1-31-46

SPARTA, Ga., Jan. 30. — Last year's boll weevil and labor shortage has "got" the Negro farmers in Hancock county.

Led by Tom Skrine, who has raised cotton in the Springfield section all his life, the Negroes over the county are changnig from cotton to dairy raising. Skrine has a herd of 10 dairy cows and expects to enlarge his herd as he can find good cows, Soil Conservation Supervisor W. N. Watt reports. 1-31-46

Convinced cows will bring them more money, the Negroes are making cotton a secondary crop, Watt said.

Going Are The Days

Old Black Joe's lamentations that his friends were gone from the cotton fields away would be still more mournful in these mechanized days. For his friends and just about everybody else are increasingly leaving the cotton fields to the machines. 2-21-46

Experiments at the Mississippi State College show that cotton can be successfully grown without hand labor of any sort. The cotton is planted, cultivated and picked all by machines. Mechanical cotton picking is not particularly new, although it is still far from general. But cotton chopping, or cotton hoeing, when the cotton plants get too large for ordinary cultivation, has required individual choppers. Now that is taken care of by "flaming," which both thins the cotton plants and kills the weeds. Birm. Ala. Age Herald

Thus the South moves another step forward in its progress toward protecting its cotton production against the competition of plastics and other fibers and imported cotton grown where labor is cheaper. Salvation for cotton in the South will be promoted by increased production per unit of labor. That means more mechanization. Although in the process some farm labor will be hurt, in the long run it will mean more prosperity for the South and all its people.

Hancock Negro Brings First Bale of Cotton

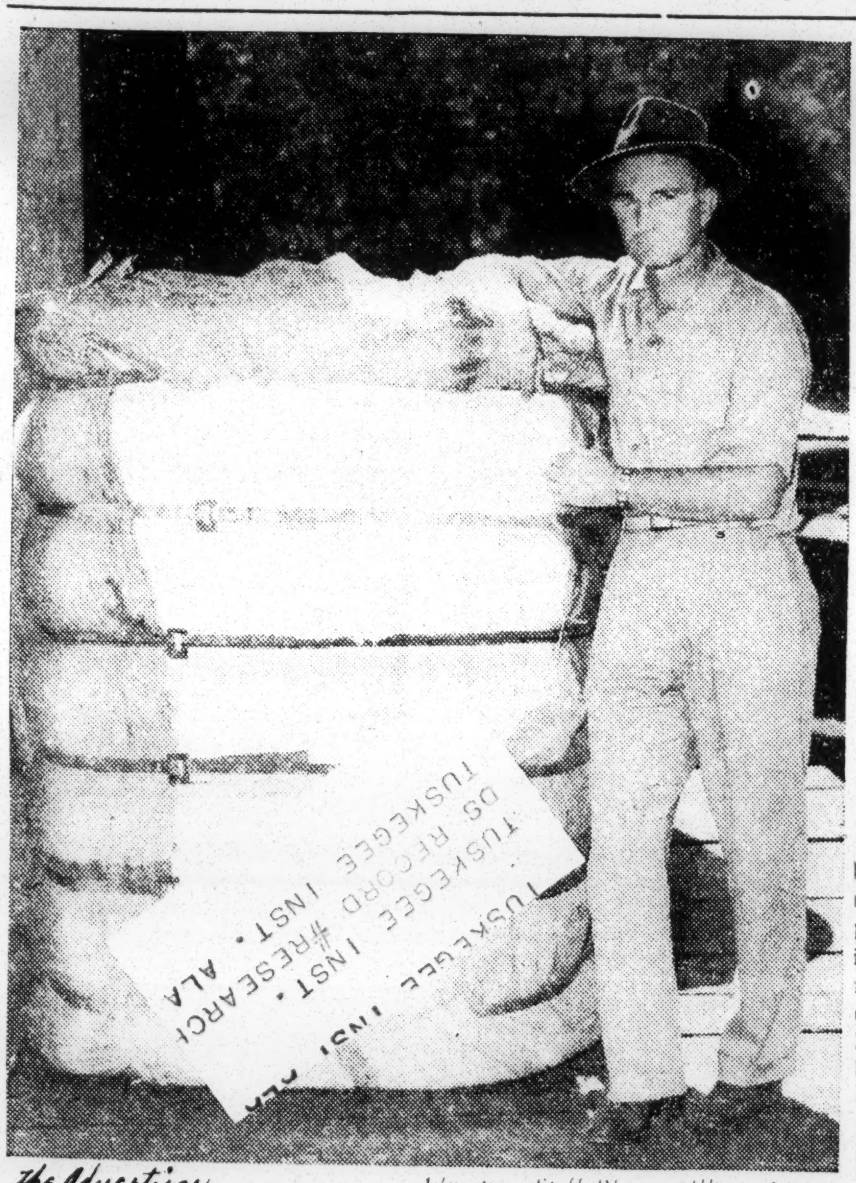
The Constitution, Atlanta, Ga. Mon. 8-19-46

Constitution State News Service.

SPARTA, Aug. 18—The first bale of cotton for the 1946 season was brought here this week by Allen J. Washington, Negro farmer, who also brought the first bale last year. The bale weighed 412 pounds, was ginned by the Hancock Gin Company and stored at the Rives & Gaissert Warehouse. Washington did not sell his cotton, but it was graded as "good middling."

The farmer has 140 acres in cotton. The first bale came in last year on Aug. 10, an early date for this section of the State.

Montgomery, Ala., Tuesday Morning, October 8, 194



The Advertiser Advertiser Staff Photo—Albert Kraus

FIRST MECHANIZED BALE—Price McLemore stands beside the first bale of cotton raised commercially by a fully mechanized process as it came out of the gin for weighing here yesterday. Every step from preparing the land through picking was done by machinery at an estimated cost of 8 cents a pound. The cotton classed middling gray, 1 inch staple. Montgomery, Ala. Tues. 10-8-46

1st Fully Mechanized Cotton In All History Is Ginned Here

The Advertiser, Montgomery, Ala. Tues. 10-8-46

By R. F. HUDSON, JR.

The first commercially produced bale of cotton ever to be cultivated exclusively by mechanical methods was ginned in Montgomery yesterday morning. That bale will be followed by 80 more from the Oaks Plantation where Price McLemore, prominent Montgomery County farmer and inventor, has brought to completion a series of experiments in cotton mechanization begun ten years ago.

The cotton was unofficially classified by government classifiers as "middling gray, 1 inch," the top grade ever to be produced by a mechanical cotton picker, as far as is known.

From preparing the land to loading the wagon to take it to the gin, only one man worked the 83 acres upon which the experiment was conducted. He was Jesse Alexander, a former tank driver in Gen. Patton's Third Army.

Two remarkable and portentous facts are represented by this first bale of cotton. First, only 8.5 man hours an acre went into the production on that cotton. Second, estimated cost of production is 8 cents a pound.

It is estimated by the Department of Agriculture that 235 man hours an acre are required in cotton farming non-mechanized. This is contrasted to the eight and half man hours per acre on the McLemore cotton.

The general consensus of opinion among Montgomery County cotton growers, both partially mechanized and non-mechanized, is that it cost an average of at least 25 cents a pound to raise cotton elsewhere in the county. This contrasts with the estimated cost of 8 cents a pound on the McLemore cotton. The reason that the final cost a pound is an estimate is that the cotton must be picked twice this year due to unusual growing conditions.

"This conclusively demonstrates that cotton can be raised in Alabama for a price that can compete domestically with synthetic fibers and also compete on the foreign market without the need for export subsidies," McLemore said emphatically.

"The price has got to come down," he continued, "and if it doesn't then textile mills will turn completely from cotton and process only synthetic fibers

Suggestion to Negroes.

The News and Courier

Cotton, rice and tobacco are crops which for planting and cultivation have required much man-power in proportion to acreage planted. For that reason negro slavery was in the South from 17 to 70 years after it was abolished in most of the Northern and Western states. It ended in New York in 1824, in New Jersey in 1844, and earlier in New England. Grain, cattle and hog production demanded not nearly as many "hands" to the farm as the cotton plantation had to have, and for Western prairie lands machines for harvesting were introduced on large scale about the time that the Confederate war began. Charleston, S. C.

Southern agriculture is entering a revolution. Machines are to pick cotton and hoe it too. Livestock, poultry production and fruit crops are increasing on an immense scale.

These changes should have the attention of the teachers and leaders of the Southern colored people. The other day The News and Courier quoted the saying of Colonel Wyndham Manning that on his Fairfield county ranch three men are now doing the work on 920 acres that formerly supported 14 colored families. In that is warning to colored people. Hundreds of thousands of them migrated when the boll weevils infested the South, and the "infestation" by machines and by the kinds of farming that employ relatively few workers may be more serious to the colored people than the weevils were. Mon. 10-7-46

The color of a worker's skin does not diminish his "man-power". Negroes, a large proportion of them, have been and are skilled artisans. In the South white people have no "race prejudice" when it comes to hiring carpenters and bricklayers.

In these new conditions that will prevail on the Southern lands, the employe must have a sense of responsibility as well as skill. The owner of pure bred cattle will not hire a man, white or colored, who cannot be trusted to care for the herd. Who shall be foremen on the farms? Who will be paid the higher wages?

Mark, we are saying that in South Carolina farm, or land, production is likely to increase on large scale and that farm employment probably will, at the same time, decrease. Of laborers, the fittest will survive. Does "race prejudice" fully explain absence of negroes from Western dairy and livestock farms? 10-7-46

To the colored people The News and Courier is saying that it is more important that they have a sense of responsibility, of trustworthiness, even than skill. We have known negroes who had this sense; we know them now. If as a race they are to maintain themselves, in competition with white men, they must acquire the sense of responsibility equal to that of white men.

To the negro in the South economic future is of more import than political future.

THE COTTON REVOLUTION IS HERE

The Advertiser, Montgomery, Ala.

There is no denying the significance to Southern agriculture of Price McLemore's experiment in mechanizing the production of raw cotton. Cotton culture in Dixie is entering a new era, and the ginning of the first completely mechanized bale in the history of cotton production is an event hardly less important than the perfection of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1793.

A front page story in yesterday's Advertiser gave the world a detailed account of that bale of cotton, from the preparation of the land and the planting of the seed up to the moment when the bale of ginned cotton rolled from the press in Montgomery. Wed. 10-9-46

Two all-important facts were revealed in the story. One is that cotton can be successfully grown without the use of tedious, costly, backbreaking hand labor. Proof of that conclusion is the planting and cultivation of 83 acres on the McLemore plantation without the use of one hour's hand labor. Furthermore, an expected yield of a bale per acre is irrefutable evidence that mechanized cultivation is as efficient as the old style cultivation by hand labor.

The second profound implication of the cotton story is the rather astonishing fact that cotton can be produced at a cost of eight cents or less per pound. Less than nine man-hours of mechanized labor went into the production of a bale of mechanically cultivated cotton, whereas the Department of Agriculture figures that it requires 235 man-hours of labor to culti-

vate an acre of cotton by the traditional methods. Montgomery farmers estimate that the cost of production by hand labor runs to twenty-five cents per pound, roughly three times as much as the McLemore cost of machine production.

Mr. McLemore used $9,000 worth of machinery to cultivate his 83-acre experimental cotton project, and his estimated production cost includes a generous allowance for depreciation on the equipment.

The impact of the McLemore experiment on Southern agriculture is nothing short of revolutionary. Clearly, human brawn and muscle cannot compete with machines even in growing cotton fiber. It may be ten years, or twenty, before machines have displaced hand labor in the cultivation and harvesting of the South's cotton, but ultimately the conversion will be total. And if the South is not to have a vast number of unskilled, occupationally displaced persons, she must begin now planning for rehabilitation of cotton workers.

The implications for thousands of small, marginal hill farmers are clear. They must adapt their farm programs to something other than cotton.

King Cotton's Tottering Throne Finds New Hope

The Times-Union Jacksonville, Fla.

An Alabama farmer-inventor has found what might be developed into the solution of America's cotton problem. It is the complete mechanization of cotton farming, or as nearly so, it seems, as may be humanly possible. And from the standpoint of production costs this new method is far ahead of manual farming, even though at this point the mechanization has made only its first step. *Fri. 10-11-46*

The farmer-inventor is Price McLemore, whose name undoubtedly will be written in large letters in the agricultural history books of the future. Mr. McLemore a few days ago turned in for ginning at Montgomery the first commercially produced bale of cotton ever to be cultivated exclusively by mechanical means. It was produced on his Montgomery County plantation, and marks the completion of a series of experiments in cotton mechanization begun 10 years ago.

Government classifiers rated the first bale unofficially as "middling gray, one inch," which is the top grade ever to be produced by a mechanical cotton picker, as far as is known, says the Montgomery Advertiser in a report of the development, which adds:

From preparing the land to load the wagon to take the cotton to the gin, only one man worked the 83 acres on which the experimental bale was produced and from which 80 more bales are expected to be taken. That man was Jesse Alexander, a former tank driver in Gen. George Patton's Third Army in Europe.

Two remarkable facts of great significance are represented by the first completely mechanized bale, says The Advertiser. First, only 8.53 man hours an acre went into the production of that cotton. Second, estimated cost of production was eight cents a pound.

In contrast to these figures is the Department of Agriculture's estimate that 235 man hours an acre are required in cotton farming non-mechanized. Among Montgomery County cotton growers, the consensus is that it costs an average of at least 25 cents a pound to raise cotton elsewhere in the county, which probably is a reasonably accurate average for all cotton-producing States of the South.

Mr. McLemore stands to make a neat profit on his first mechanized crop of cotton, if the staple prices hold somewhere around present figures which approximate 40 cents a pound. He doubtless will be able to hold his own for many years in competing with other fibers which are making steady inroads against cotton. But to what extent his method can be applied to the production of all American cotton must be determined by future developments. Naturally, many questions remain unanswered at this stage.

Conceivably though the McLemore method could be developed to the point where America's King Cotton could be rejuvenated and given much longer life than it is expected at this time to enjoy. It might even be given a leading position in the march of world crops again, much depending, of course, on success of the move that has been hinted at to establish a world-wide level of wages for workers of the various categories.

There is this certainty, however: Unless the McLemore mechanization or some other means provides the needed rejuvenation, King Cotton will not be able for much longer to retain his throne.

Hope For South Seen In Mechanized Cotton

The News, Birmingham, Ala.
Tues. 10-8-46

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Oct. 8—(AP)—New hope for the cotton industry was seen today by a Montgomery County grower who claims to have produced the first bale of cotton cultivated entirely by machines for commercial purposes.

"This conclusively demonstrates," said Price McLemore of the cotton which he says cost 8 cents a pound to grow, "that cotton can be raised in Alabama for a price that can compete domestically with synthetic fibers and also compete on the foreign market without the need for export subsidies."

The first bale of completely mechanized cotton was ginned yesterday, and McLemore said 80 more are on the way from his 83-acre cotton field at Oaks plantation.

From start to finish, McLemore said, only one man worked the field. He estimated that the first bale was produced with 8.53 man-hours of labor per acre, compared with Department of Agriculture estimates of 235 man-hours required for hand cultivation.

The grower said a five-acre plot had been mechanically cultivated by the Mississippi Experiment Station, but that his crop was the first produced on a commercial basis.

* * *

Phenix City Trial Opens

PHENIX CITY, Ala., Oct. 8—(AP)

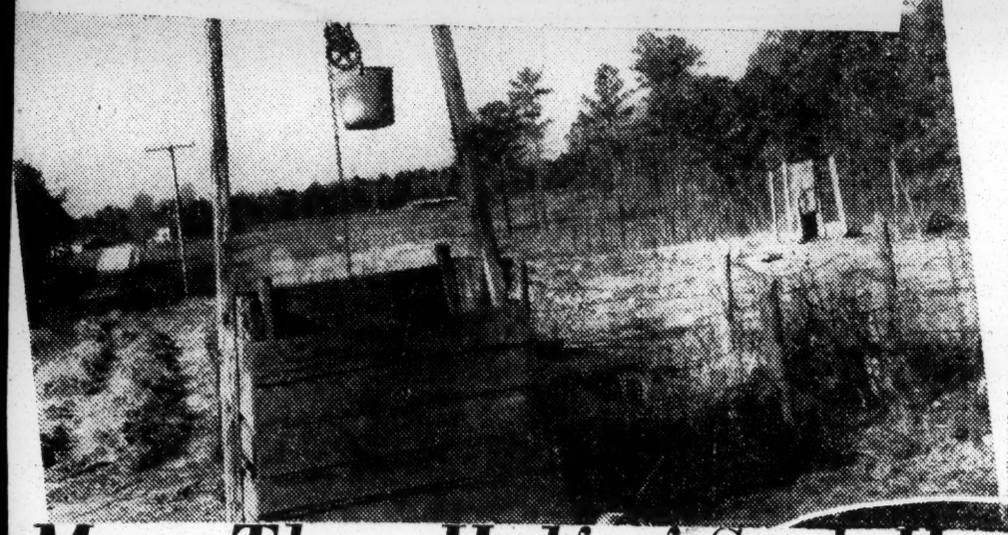
SIXTY NEGRO FARMERS of Tallapoosa County, Ala., have found milk and cotton to be a good combination for an assured year-round income, according to a report received by the U. S. Department of Agriculture from the Alabama State Extension Service. *Birmingham News 10-7-46*

The 60 farmers are selling their milk to an evaporated milk plant. From January through March they sold 153,100 pounds of milk and grossed $5,195.40, of which $1,061.70 was in subsidy payments from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It averaged $32 per month each for the farmers. Most of the farmers have three or four cows. These farmers say they like the idea of having money all year-round instead of just in the Fall at cotton ginning time. *Birmingham Ala.*

2 1946

Living Conditions

Poor Housing Is an Old Story to Farmers



More Than Half of Such Homes In Virginia Are Far Below Par

Richmond, Va.
2-10-46
Times-Dispatch

By M. Mary Terretta

MORE than half of Virginia's 294,208 rural homes today are substandard, representing the major ill of the acute housing problem in farming areas and hamlets where live 1,733,098 of the Commonwealth's 2,677,773 population.

2-10-46

There is a vast accumulated deficit of farm housing of all types in the State, Dr. H. N. Young, new director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station at Blacksburg, pointed out recently in announcing that there is a dire need for a $200,000,000 building program on the farms of Virginia. Shortly after assuming his new post in January, Dr. Young gave a green light to a threefold rural housing survey project. The survey will obtain facts on rural housing and make recommendations for improving the living conditions of farm families, in conformity with adequate standard requirements for health, convenience and income.

The Experiment Station director and the leaders of the threefold survey project believe that the time is opportune today to conduct such a study. The prime ultimate objective of the survey is to help rural Virginians improve their living through better housing and the installation of modern conveniences in the home by investing wisely their wartime earnings. Many farmers have raised their annual income of $550 earned in 1941, and farm leaders are eager that this increase be utilized for improved living.

Dr. Garnett believes that education can play a major role in helping the rural people improve their living. He cites census figures show that although Virginia's rural housing is somewhat better than the average in the Southern States, it is far below the national average in this respect. Just as Virginia's annual income for farmers in 1941 was $550, compared with the nation's average of $693, the per cent of her rural homes needing major repairs is 37, compared with 33.9 per cent for the nation.

Stemming from poor housing are other ills found in rural areas that lower the State's average below that of the nation. Whereas 31.3 per cent of the nation's farm homes have electricity, only 23.7 per cent of Virginia's are wired; only 12.3 per cent of Virginia's farm homes have running water, compared with the nation's 17.8 per cent; the average farm in Virginia is about 50 acres and its value in 1940 was $3,860, with buildings, compared with the nation's average farm and building valued at $5,518.

The eye-opener to the poor housing situation in rural areas of the Old Dominion is found in the last available statistics compiled by the 1940 Federal census. The State had 209,208 farm homes of which 104,522 were substandard, being valued at $700 per unit or less, or under $7 monthly rental. This represents 42 per cent of the homes in which white farm families of Virginia live and 75 per cent of the Negro farm homes.

In addition, there are 63,742 rural homes in the submarginal category located in villages and hamlets of 1,000 population or less and are residences of nonfarming families and are substandard, of these are substandatial homes of modern and Colonial extremes, ranging from the few ...

Today with the crying need for homes for the returned veteran and his family, the housing problems of the State and the nation have assumed priority in the thoughts of the general public and the government. It is a major headache of Congressmen who ... rural residents.

... homes of other ... crowded, without essential conveniences ... brick or stone ... inadequate shelter for the occupants ... a State of ... house ... from the ... and ... signs to the mountainside hovel, the ... in villcroppers lean-to, the bleak unpainted ...

are whipping legislation into shape to help veterans and civilians obtain building priorities for homes. 2-10-46

Country Cousin Bypassed

But the emphasis today, even as in the days of slum clearance days of the past, is primarily to help the urban population. The country cousin has been largely by-passed.

There is an awakening, however, from the lethargy that has surrounded the problems of rural living for so many decades in Virginia.

The housing survey projects recently endorsed by the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station may be the beginning of rural renaissance for the State's 983,359 farm and 794,739 nonfarm rural population.

To help the farmer patch that old leak in the roof or build a new home, the rural sociology department of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, under Sociologist W. E. Garnett has launched a six-month survey in each of the State's 100 counties. The projected survey will compile first scientific data on rural housing as it relates to the standard requirements for health, convenience and family incomes.

The fact-finding undertaking will ascertain the reasons for the existing poor, obsolete and inadequate housing of farm people. It will discover the fundamental attitudes of rural residents toward improving their habitat and make such recommendations for rural housing that will meet an adequate standard in conformity with various income groups and the needs of health, convenience and better living. 2-10-46

At the same time, the agricultural engineering department at VPI is conducting a related study on rural housing. This survey will determine the most suitable architectural designs and materials to be used in repairing, remodeling and building of new homes throughout the State's rural counties.

When statistics have been compiled, the findings will be used by the Co-operative Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics to assist individual families with their specific housing problems in hamlet, village, crossroad and the countryside.

Dr. Garnett, an exponent of better opportunities for Virginia's rural population, is organizing the survey for field work. Actual field survey will start as soon as the Winter inclemency fades into more suitable weather for combing each of the State's 100 political subdivisions to discover how more than half of Virginians fare within their four walls called home. He will be assisted by the Virginia Extension Service and Home Demonstration Clubs. The Department of Agricultural Economics will help select the sam-

THE old oaken bucket, lack of plumbing, small drafty cabins and unpainted frame dwellings are homes to 42 per cent of white farm families and 75 per cent of Negro farm families in Virginia. More than half of the State's 294,208 rural homes in 1940 belonged to the substandard type depicted above, renting for less than $7 a month and costing less than $700 per unit. Approximately 15 rural children in the Commonwealth are growing up in homes such as pictured here compared with only one child reared in homes valued at $5,000 or above. At least 87.7 per cent of rural population in Virginia still goes to the outdoor well for water and 91 per cent have no indoor plumbing (upper left). Nearly one-fourth of the farm homes have fewer than three rooms (center and lower) and about half were built more than 50 years ago.

pling areas and groups in each county and will aid in determining standards for evaluating the homes and farms.

Miss Maude E. Wallace, assistant director of the Extension Service, disclosed that the project has the full support of the 31,000 members of the State's home demonstration clubs who last year asked the Experiment Station to conduct the study.

Both the sociological and engineering surveys will be assisted by the farm agents, the 84 home demonstration agents and 50 selected home demonstration club members in each of the 100 counties. 2-10-46

"Homemakers throughout Virginia's rural areas are keenly conscious of the need for better housing," Miss Wallace declared. "They want better living conditions for themselves and their families. But more than that, the homemakers want the country to offer young families more comfortable and convenient homes."

Why Boys Leave the Farm

HERE is the crux of the problem that initiated the rural housing survey and a determination by the farm leaders to do something about the situation. Even with the scattered and limited information available today on the rural housing problems, a mere scanning of the facts readily answers the sociological question: Why boys leave the farm!

"If rural Virginia is to hold its best young people, it must offer better living conditions," the Extension Service observes.

The evils of poor l 2-10-46
of essential home conveniences are principally responsible for youth's annual trek from the farms to urban centers. In the decade of 1930, Dr. Garnett analyzed that the Virginia counties lost approximately $100,000,000 to its cities through migration of 100,000 citizens reared and educated in rural areas. At the same time, Virginia contributed more than $200,000,000 to other States through migrants, he observed.

Shoving aside the traditionally romantic picture of the Old Dominion—where every home is a Colonial mansion with sweet magnolias blooming by the lofty veranda—realistic leaders of Virginia farm life know that he average home is a far cry from this. Majority of homes are humble dwellings, acking normal modern conveniences and nany residences are reminiscent of share-roppers' huts, with a few not unlike the cenes in "Tobacco Road." 2-10-46

Dr. Young points out that the State is eady today for a $200,000,000 building proram on the farms. He believes that this equires a vastly expanded program in research and design of farm homes and buildngs and rural electrification. To discover he needs of farm housing, he approved an nitial allotment of $6,000 to Dr. Garnett nd the rural sociology department. To continue the needed research in the agricultural fields, Dr. Young asked for an appropriation of $1,275,000 for the coming biennium for the experiment station. This would be an increase of $505,000 over the present budget.

If $200,000,000 is spent in the next five years for a building program on the farms, the State's expenditure would be one-thirtieth of the estimated $6,000,000,000 to be expended in the nation for a building program. For an agricultural unit of Virginia's size and importance, the leaders consider this not an excessive amount. 2-10-46

Obtaining better housing for rural families is not totally the problem of farm families and their leaders. Dr. Garnett finds that one of the evil consequences of the existing substandard housing on the farms is the undermining of a family's self-respect. This, he cites, is the reason for the evident lack of participation in communal activities of farm people. Moreover, it is responsible for the lack of interest manifested in a locality's, the State's and the nation's social, educational and government affairs.

"There can be little dignity of living in a $500 home," Dr. Garnett asserts. Yet in rural Virginia 15 children grow up in such homes to one child reared in a home valued at $5,000 or more.

Startling Contrast

The 1940 census paints this picture of conveniences found in Virginia rural homes: only 4 per cent cook with gas, kerosene or electricity; only 2 per cent have central heating systems; only 9 per cent have toilets in the house; only 24 per cent have electric lights; fewer than 13 per cent have running water; 49 per cent have refrigerators and 47 per cent have radios.

Comparative figures for the same conveniences found in urban centers of the State tell why youth and adults migrate to the cities. Electric lights are available to nearly 91 per cent of urban population; running water to more than 91 per cent; indoor toilets to 81; central heating to nearly 40; refrigerators to 91 and radios to 84 per cent. 2-10-46

Although Virginia is rapidly becoming industrialized, the farm scene has changed but little through the years. When Winter comes and snow falls, many rural home scenes are living enactments of the composite picture painted in "Snowbound." Such knowledge may help youth understand Whittier's verse, but the long thoughts of youth are, nevertheless, attracted to the city on the hill where better opportunities beckon, where he no longer has to be a Lincoln reading by the dim candlelight or a kerosene lamp, or tramp the snow path to the well for a bucket of water.

Although more than half, or 1,733,098, of Virginia's 2,677,773 population live in rural areas, they were housed in about half of the State's total dwellings numbering 627,532 in 1940.

Twenty-one per cent of farm homes have only three or fewer rooms. And 18 per cent of those house more than 1.5 persons per room compared with a comparable 7 per cent average for the cities. More than 32 per cent of rural homes need major repairs compared with 15 per cent in urban centers.

One of the problems of poor rural housing is the antiquity of the structures, 47 per cent of the submarginal ones being at least 35 years old. To break down the figures, 68 per cent of these older homes are between 40 and 60 years old and 9 per cent were built more than 60 years ago. Very few of the submarginal houses were constructed within the last score years.

Spot surveys in certain areas have disclosed that a surprisingly large number of rural homes date back to pioneer days. Most of these are in the western section where exists today the most acute housing need. One count of 50 homes in a community disclosed that 17 were more than 100 years old, while another check showed 27 per cent to be more than 50 years old.

Dr. Garnett and the Extension Service readily admit that the old homes are generally more substantially constructed than the modern home, but the fault lies in the arrangement which is poor for modern living. Moreover, many lack modern conveniences and need major repairs. 2-10-46

In the old and in many of the more recently but inadequately built homes, the burden of housekeeping falls hard on the mother, Miss Wallace reports. Inconvenient kitchens, lack of running water and washing machines and other labor-saving devices result in tired mothers and force young girls to leave homes early. The worn-out housekeeper finds herself too weary, her nerves edgy, to give much aid, advice and comfort to her growing family. The lack of necessities and conveniences, overcrowding and general inadequacy contribute in no small degree to the poor health conditions found in rural areas.

Child Marriages

SOCIOLOGISTS cite poor housing as one of the leading causes for child and early marriages in the rural areas. Most of these come from one of the 166,000 submarginal families living in substandard homes of Virginia. 2-10-46

The major issue at stake in tackling the poor rural housing is not to discover "how to keep 'em on the farm." It is more deep-rooted and fundamental than any one isolated factor, farm leaders aver.

Environment being a major factor in the development of individual character, the physical condition of a home determines to a great extent the atmosphere in which the occupants live daily. To nurture ambition, encourage achievement and help develop the natural abilities, capacities and aptitudes of people are the concern of the farm leaders sponsoring the housing improvement program of the Commonwealth.

Dr. Garnett believes that if the facts of poor rural housing were known to the average businessman in the State, he would be eager to improve the situation because it is sound business.

"If reasonable standards of housing and home conveniences were generally prevailing in rural homes, it would add millions of dollars annually to the business dealers in paint, home fixtures, refrigerators, bathtubs, washing machines and other commodities," he points out. It will mean improving the State of agricultural projects and add to the economic activity and business development generally throughout the Commonwealth.

Initiative Lowered

New REA Policy to Aid Isolated Farmers

WASHINGTON.

United States Department of Agriculture officials say colored farmers living on back roads and in sparsely settled areas will benefit by recent Congressional action liberalizing Rural Electrification Administration loan terms for the electrification of farms and rural homes.

Claude R. Wickard, administrator, said reducing the interest rate on loans to 2% and extending the repayment period from 25 to 35 years will enable REA borrowers more nearly to make electricity available to those isolated farmers in their territories.

500,000 Southern Farm Families Face Starvation

What is to become of the 500,000 families in the South whose jobs in two years can be abolished by the Mechanized Cotton picker and other machinery is one of the most, if not the most critical problem facing our nation.

The United States Department of Agriculture recently issued a report that the newy introduced mechanized cotton picker now successfully can do the work of 1,500 farm workers. There is estimated that, 500,000 farm workers are employed in cotton farming. According to these figures it is calculated that eight out of ten farm workers will be made jobless when the new mechanized cotton picker are installed.

Of course these machines will mean "emancipation" for the thousands of Negro and white workers from the poverty and drudgery of the rural South. I must agree also with the former Governor of Louisiana, Sam Houston Jones who in a recent article in the Negro Digest declared that the modern mechanization of Southern farming will result in a better life of all the South, Negro and white. No one can deny this in the face of man's progress since the great Industrial Revolution. However's the world's gigantic mechanical development has taken over three hundred years while those mechanized cotton pickers and other machines threaten to make 500,000 farm workers in the South homeless, destitute and jobless in two years.

We are not living in the horse and buggy age. This is an age of speed. Planes cross the country from Los Angeles to New York City in 5 hours. These farm workers will migrate to our overcrowded cities in the hope of a new life. But without knowledge of city ways they face a fate that will write one of the darkest and most inhuman pages in American history.

If this is not to happen we must call upon all who believe in Justice to "strike" to protect the right to a decent Human Life for these 500,000 farm families of the South. I say "strike" because it is the one word today all Americans know means "fight by common people for a better way of life.

Cost Less Than $1,000

Cheaper Rural Homes Planned by Patterson

BIRMINGHAM—(ANP)—Proposal for low-cost hygienic housing for rural farm families in the South, wherein families undertake most of the construction themselves, is currently receiving considerable attention from architects and builders here. The idea is the brainchild of Dr. F. D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute.

To support this idea, Dr. Patterson has already built a house on his farm, using large concrete blocks for everything but the roof. This part of the building is of lumber, which represents the principal cash expense, along with plumbing.

Simple wooden molds would be needed to cast the blocks, which according to the proposed design, would be about sixteen inches long, eight inches wide, and three inches thick. Children could do the casting. Cement is plentiful here, as is native-cut lumber.

The house would have four double walls, tied together with half blocks. The walls would be made by sealing cement blocks together with an air space between. A cement floor would be laid following the leveling of the ground inside the walled enclosure, and the roof would complete the framework building.

The entire cost of the house, provided the farmer and his family did all the work, is scaled between $500 and $750 in cash, without plumbing. With complete bathroom and kitchen fixtures, the cost would run about $2,000.

piration. The first is responsible for the second.

In the decade through 1944, approximately 73,000 Virginia families have been provided with better housing through $137,100,000 advanced by private lending institutions and insured by the Federal Housing Administration. But relatively few rural families are included in this group, Dr. Garnett points out, explaining that the "farm incomes are too uncertain for much help from FHA." Some farm families have been aided through the Farm Security Administration, but only a small percentage of these included the submarginal housing.

Miss Wallace reports that improvements were made in 102,000 Virginia homes in 1945 through the Virginia Agricultural Extension Service. A total of 7,433 kitchens were remodeled or improved, running water was installed in 520 homes and a total of 18,000 farm homes were repaired and remodeled . . . all this in spite of the wartime shortages of labor and material. It was done through an educational program and by farmers doing their own work.

"If there is to be much improvement in the rural housing, the farmer will have to do most of it himself, assisted by such agencies as are available," the leaders observe. The war years have put a jingle into the jeans of most farmers and farm workers. Timely education and expert assistance may divert this financial reserve to invest the earnings wisely for better living on the farms is the idea behind the experiment station's movement.

2 1946

Prices

Drop in Cotton Prices Hit South

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

Farmers Miss Profits, Told to Seek Loans

WASHINGTON — (NNPA) — Losses from the recent drop in cotton prices have deprived nearly all of the 870,000 colored farmers in the South—who are largely dependent upon cotton for a livelihood—of the profits they hoped to make by the boom in prices. Sat. 11-9-46

While they missed the chance to sell at peak prices, they may hold their cotton off the market by obtaining government loans at 92½% of parity, the loan rate for the 1946 crop, the Agriculture Department pointed out last Friday.

Under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended and supplemented, the Commodity Credit Corporation is directed to make loans to farmers on six commodities, one of which is cotton.

Loans Recommended

More than half of the 10,000 farms raising cotton in the South are operated by colored farmers. Agriculture Department experts said there was little danger that they would be affected at all by the recent panic on the cotton market.

Farm Opportunities Dwindle

Need Increases for More Off-Farm Jobs

Pittsburg Courier

Pittsburg, Pa.

WASHINGTON. — Dwindling farming opportunities caused by technological progress calls for a land policy that will help surplus farm workers and their families find other employment, says Agricultural Economist John M. Brewster, writing in the winter number of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Land Policy Review.

It is pointed out that such a policy is urgently needed in the South where mechanized cotton production threatens to displace thousands of white and colored cotton farmers.

Brewster reviews the relationship between land policy and population growth showing that until 1920, bringing new land into production meant more farming opportunities as a means of providing food and fiber for a population that was growing faster than the farmer's ability to produce.

PROGRESS EXCEEDS GROWTH Sat 2-23-46

He points out, however, that between 1920 and 1940 technological progress overtook population growth. During that period, while the population increased twenty-five percent, farm technological advance stepped up production thirty-five percent; and did it with nearly two and a half million fewer farm workers.

The economist concludes that new land no longer means more farming opportunities. New soil resources based on wider use of fertilizer and lime, new varieties of crops, pest control, crop rotation and other improved practices aided by mechanization is making it possible for fewer and fewer farmers to produce more and more food fiber. This can only mean, Brewster indicates, that year by year, more farm people must seek off farm employment. It is pointed out that colored farmers may be seriously affected, because they comprise thirty-five percent of the South's tenants and sharecroppers.

Jones Foresees Mechanization Era For South

Montgomery Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.
Fri. 3-29-46

Chamber Of Commerce Diners Hear Stirring Challenge For Region

The South is approaching an era of farm mechanization that will rock it to its "very foundatiotns," former Gov. Sam Jones, of Louisiana declared here last night.

And, he said in an address at the annual dinner of the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce:

"Paradoxically, this development can either be the greatest threat to our economy, or the greatest opportunity the South has ever known."

Strong Appeal

Sounding a strong appeal for a broad industrialization program below the Mason-Dixon line, Jones asserted that "in the next 10 to 15 years we are in danger of losing one-half our farm population by mechanization."

Federal authorities predict the South will have to create 5,000,000 non-farm jobs by 1956 to have full employment, he said, whereas only 8,000,000 such jobs are in existence now.

"Thus," he asserted, "we will either see our displaced farm workers move out to the already industrilized regions and suffer a positive loss in the South's population, or we shall build a strong economy and utilize the displaced farm workers in the more lucrative occupations and thus build a new and thriving South."

The process of farm mechanization has been going on a long time, the former Louisiana governor recalled, and by 1956 he said the agricultural population will be only about 17 per cent of the South's total, as compared with 60 per cent in 1910.

The new South, he declared, must "shake our people out of the lethargy that has made them economic and political slaves.

Fri. 3-29-46

Training Needed

"It must develop a trained and educated citizenship, geared to the economic possibilities of the region. It must cease to rely on outside help to do the job. It must stand on its own feet; develop its own industries; and meet its problems by sheer force of its own intellectual and awakened leadership."

Time was, he continued, when the South was rich and the East was poor, but "the East did not sit idly by and bemoan its fate. It set about to fight and work."

And, he advised, "our course in the South should not be to cuss the damyankees, but to emulate them in the commercial world."

Fri. 3-29-46

Jones predicted the day would come when the South will have "saved this nation from social, economic and political pitfalls of calamitous portent."

Almost 400 were served last night at one of the most successful membership meetings held in recent years. The Blue and Gray Room of the Whitley Hotel had a festive atmosphere as the tables were decorated with colorful snapdragons and quiet music played as the guests were served.

S. E. Elmore, president of the Chamber of Commerce, opened the meeting and acknowledged the services of the past presidents. He introduced former President of the Chamber of Commerce L. D. Rouse, who reported on the progress of the city and the Chamber of Commerce during the past two years.

Fri. 3-29-46

Mr. Elmore introduced John P. Figh and awarded him a pin for 25 years of "faithful service to the Chamber of Commerce." Mr. Figh is assistant secretary of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Elmore introduced the board of directors of the organization and said that without their "faithful endeavors the Chamber of Commerce would not be the great organization it is today."

The meeting was turned over to James J. Durr, chairman of the annual dinner committee. Mr. Durr introduced Governor Chauncy Sparks, who presented the guest speaker of the evening, former Governor Jones. In presenting Mr. Jones, Governor Sparks said: "I present a former governor with a distinguished record of service, presently a statesman of the South."

Jury May Act Soon On Race Riot Charges

The Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.
Mon. 9-30-46

Drawn Out Proceedings May End By Friday; 25 Await Verdict

LAWRENCEBURG, TENN., Sept. 29.—(AP)—A jury of white farmers, laborers and tradesmen likely will pass judgment this week upon 25 Negroes accused of participating in the Columbia racial disorders last February.

Both prosecution and defense attorneys agreed at the weekend recess that the long drawn out proceedings may come to an end perhaps by Thursday or Friday.

Presentation of testimony, begun eight days ago, is moving along faster than selection of the jury, which required six weeks, and the questioning of more than 700 veniremen.

The trial was transferred to Lawrenceburg, seat of Lawrence County, from Columbia in adjoining Maury County, upon a motion for a change of venue by defense attorneys employed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Some of the defendants are charged with attempt to commit murder; others with being accessories before the fact.

The charges arose from disorders which developed the night of Feb. 5, following a day of mounting tension over a clash that morning involving a white radio repairman and two Negroes.

The state completed its case Thursday night after the three-man prosecution staff, headed by State District Attorney General Paul F. Bumpus, sought to prove the defendants were in Columbia's Mink Slide Negro business section, shortly before four Columbia policemen were wounded there that night.

Prosecution testimony also centered largely on an effort to show that the part of Mink Slide entered by the policemen between 9:45 and 10 p.m., was lighted sufficiently so that those who fired a score of shotgun blast at them could have identified them as officers of the law.

Defense strategy thus far has been concentrated upon an effort to convince the jury that the policemen might ha have been mistaken for part of a crowd of whites, which it contends, the Negro residents believed was converging upon Mink Slide

The South Saves Itself

The Advertiser Montgomery, Ala.

When Sam Jones, former governor of Louisiana, spoke before the Catholic Committee of the South convention in New Orleans last Wednesday, he emphasized a matter that should give considerable concern to all Southerners. With the coming of mechanized agriculture to this section, there is bound to be a lot of hardship and some social upheaval. The problem in its essence is no different from that which has always been faced by the world wherever and whenever mechanical advances outmoded hand workmanship. Eighteenth Century England felt it keenly when machinery invaded the weaving industry. The South experienced it once before when Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. It is staring us in the face now with the prospective wide use of a mechanical cotton picker that will throw thousands of farm families off the land they have share-cropped for generations.

Mon. 9-30-46

But always the problem of what to do with displaced persons has finally been solved with advances in living standards, higher wages in new industries, and better economic levels for all. That does not mean, however, that there will not be disruptions which may cause temporary shifts of employment, or a time of unemployment for unskilled labor, with concomitant hardships and necessary readjustments in social thinking. The displaced workers may leave the South, but their conditions will not be improved elsewhere, and the burden of public care will have shifted largely from a local to a national level. The sorry picture of the itinerant worker driven from his native habitat which Steinbeck drew in The Grapes of Wrath may be re-enacted, this time in the Southeastern states.

* * * *

There are, however, solutions, and the South has it in its power to anticipate the trouble and to alleviate it greatly if it comes. Mr. Jones emphasized that fact. Regional planning in the fields of agriculture and industry is the answer. Much has already been done in the matter of changing the South's one-crop agricultural economy to one of diversified farming. Cotton is no longer king. Southern agriculturists have already proved how lucrative the raising of livestock may be if properly trained men go about the job under the direction of agricultural experts. But research laboratories which are springing up, one of which has been so conspicuously successful in Birmingham, are constantly finding new ways of making use of the South's products. Dr. Carver at Tuskegee gave his life to the discovery of new ways to use sweet potatoes and peanuts in industry. More and more the farmers of the South are finding markets for various Southern-grown crops, and industry is learning how to make new and useful products out of what our Southern land will grow in abundance.

* * * *

But, as Mr. Jones pointed out, there is little sense in producing raw products merely for shipment out of the district. The South has long enough been dependent on Northern manufacturers who buy what we have to sell and then send it back to us in finished materials at a profit. The proper industrialism of the South will manufacture in these states the products which we need and which we can provide in abundance because of our long growing season and favorable soil conditions. The establishment of factories by Southern capital, employing Southern labor, manufacturing Southern articles for Southern consumption will make the South more prosperous and its people more happy. For with added income come better schools and better public health measures.

Mon. 9-30-46

That is what Mr. Jones meant when he said that the South must "develop a positive, constructive, aggressive program—which will not look to the outside for help." He is eternally right, for only the South can save itself.—Birmingham Age-Herald.